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The primary qualifications of a school superintendent are reviewed as a guide to boards of education in the selection of a new administrator. Topics discussed include the characteristics of a good superintendent, his responsibilities, his relationships with the school system and the school board, procedures for his selection (i.e. announcement of vacancy, examination of local candidates, informing the community), expectations of the board and the superintendent, and a sample superintendent's contract. (JK)

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FOREWORD

Schools in America are at the center of the vital currents of community life. They have helped to create and must cope with a swirling whirlpool of change. They have become vastly more visible in the arena of political action. They are being called upon to grapple with broad social issues many of which do not immediately manifest themselves as educational problems. They have become perhaps the most visible institution of community life. They have moved along through time adding new ideas and responsibilities while at the same time discarding obsolete practices in order to keep in tune with the attitudes, beliefs, hopes, and aspirations of the American people.

As young America changed from a political experiment in a remote world frontier to the most powerful industrial nation in the world, the schools changed, too. The demands upon the school changed, the methods employed by teachers changed, the number and types of its pupils changed, the multitude of districts diminished — only those elements which withstood the test of

time and growth have survived. The school, today, is indeed a comprehensive, effective, dynamic, and clearly essential social institution.

Likewise, the evolution of the superintendency is not complete. It never will be complete in a free and changing society as long as the schools remain decentralized. What new form it will take, what new techniques and philosophies it will develop in the next century depend upon the hard facts of history yet unwritten, upon the functions which are assigned to the public schools, but most of all, perhaps, upon the professional vision, enterprise, statesmanship, and courage of individuals who will comprise the generations of superintendents and board members still to come. Events will provide the backdrop, but the success of this living drama will depend upon the men and women who in every community will carry forward the roles so brilliantly played by their predecessors.

The school systems of America have become the chief instrument of democracy for the enlightenment of the people. The unselfish devotion of more than 100,000 school board members, most of whom serve without financial remuneration, who help direct the gigantic enterprise of today literally, is without parallel in the history of the world. These people direct an enterprise that—

(1) Employs nearly 2 million teachers.
(2) Employs nearly 15,000 superintendents of schools.
(3) Employs hundreds of thousands of nonprofessional persons.
(4) Directs the expenditure of approximately $28 billion annually.
(5) Directs the educational destiny of 22,000 school districts.
(6) Sets the educational policies that affect the education of more than 43 million boys and girls.

But perhaps the single most important task board members ever have is the selection of a superintendent of schools to administer the educational program.

Most of the time a board of education strives to *retain* the services of a competent executive. But, from time to time, a vacancy does occur, and then the board must search for, select, and employ a new superintendent. As public education has become more and more complex, its management has become more and more difficult. Increasingly greater skill is required for the successful management of modern

schools. Nothing that the board does is more important than employing and retaining a professionally prepared and dedicated superintendent.

The need for criteria and procedures that a board of education can employ when it comes face-to-face with the task of selecting a new executive officer led to the appointment in 1962 of a joint committee by the AASA and the NSBA. After extensive deliberations the committee produced and the sponsoring organizations published a document entitled "On Selecting a Superintendent of Schools." This publication was applauded by board members and superintendents and was soon out of print. This booklet, "Selecting a Superintendent of Schools," incorporates new research findings, new insights, and brings the work of the original committee up-to-date.

Of course, no one can guarantee that the principles and procedures identified in this document inevitably will result in a wise choice. But some practices have been identified that more often than not result in an intelligent decision. If the board of education is to rely on more than chance in selecting a superintendent, it would do well to review this document. The Associations hope that consideration of practices recommended in this report will enable school boards to avoid potential pitfalls, that it will stimulate discussion, that it will help superintendents rise to the high expectations their boards hold for them, and, most important, that it will result in the selection of ever-better superintendents of schools.

Harold V. Webb
Executive Director, NSBA

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Executive Secretary, AASA

SETTING THE COURSE

As a "typical" school board member you are serving a four-year term which overlaps the terms of four other members of the board. You represent the entire district, and you have been elected on a non-partisan ticket in a general election. There is no limit to the number of terms you may serve. Of course, you "donate" your services, have no office space, and if you need secretarial assistance you must request it from the regular central office staff. Last year you attended one and often two regular meetings of the board each month, and on occasion you and your fellow board members called an executive session.

You and your fellow board members are respected and influential persons. Most of you occupy positions of responsibility in business, the professions, or the skilled trades and crafts. You and your fellow board members are residents of long standing — considerably less transient than members of the school staff.

You may come from a rural village, a crossroads town, a suburban community, or a teeming city. But, at least in one sense, that's not important. What is important is that you are a school board member — a member of a vast company, united by a common hope, by faith in human achievement, and by a mutual concern that the doors of opportunity stand open for every child, youth, and adult. Education in America is not for the intellectual, economic, and social elite alone, but for all who are capable of becoming participating members of our society. To the schoolboards of this land is given the responsibility of keeping the schools free in order that these same schools may play an effective and vital role in preparing free men, able to protect and promote a free society.

Yours is no easy task. Membership on a board of education is not for the faint of heart. Service on a board of education is not the kind of thing for which bands parade and play — but it is American to the

core. The responsibilities are large, and the opportunities for service are unlimited.

As a board member, you look to the future steadfastly. Decisions that you and your fellow board members make set the course of education for future years. And no decision is more important than the one you make when confronted with the necessity and opportunity to employ a new executive officer — a superintendent of schools.

EVERY BOARD AT SOME TIME

Every board will, at some time, select a new superintendent; and, within the legal limits imposed by the state, the job of selection is totally up to it. It is obvious that the caliber of the person selected will play a large part in determining the scope and quality of the educational program that will be developed in the school district. For this reason the board should make every effort to secure the best superintendent that financial resources will permit. The board does not perform its duty adequately if it simply appoints the most readily available person. Only careful study of the situation and a planned program can reasonably assure selection of the best individual.

If the choice of a new superintendent is to be made with wisdom, board members must find answers to a number of basic questions, such as: (a) What are the essential steps in an effective selection procedure? (b) Who should be involved in the selection process? (c) What should the board expect from the outgoing superintendent? (d) How can able people be attracted? (e) What will the applicants want to know about the board and the school district? (f) How do you find out whether applicants possess the desired qualifications? (g) How do you select the "right" one? (h) At what points in the selection process should public announcements be made?

SUPERINTENDENTS ARE PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

During the past one hundred years many great school superintendents have worked relentlessly and ceaselessly in the interest of educational opportunities for children. Like pioneers on a great frontier, they have blazed trails, discovered principles, and established precedents that are a rich heritage to the entire profession of school administration.

The qualities of mind and heart required for such greatness have not changed; but society has changed, and present-day challenges to

school superintendents are cast in new forms against changing backdrops. Spirit, courage, vision, and commitment are but part of the attributes a great superintendent must have in this day and age. He must cope with the myriads of forces that affect the schools in this dynamic society of ours, but to do so, he must comprehend those forces and have the skill to deal with them in a statesmanlike manner. Furthermore, understandings and insights relative to their implications for old and new knowledge, for priorities in content, and for administrative structure, organization, and method demand competence of a special professional character. Today, every school district needs, calls for, and, indeed, must have qualities of greatness in its educational leaders.

Boards of education expect the superintendent to be an educational leader. They expect, too — and rightly so — competence in business management; plant construction, operation, and maintenance; personnel administration; and community relationships. They also expect the superintendent to be a manager — a social engineer — able to energize the resources of the district and to give direction to the enterprise. All of this is sought in one man.

And, yet, a superintendent is even more than this. Like a surgeon, an artist, or a judge, he has an allegiance to an ideal and a loyalty to the goals of his profession that go beyond his immediate contractual relationships with his employer. He is devoted to public education, which he has been educated to understand, to organize, and to administer in ways most likely to achieve educational rewards for all pupils. He has an ideal of personal performance and professional responsibility for the educational well-being of children, youth, and adults that transcends all other considerations. Boards of education that fully recognize the importance of professional ideals attract devoted and able professional employees and obtain the type of service from them that assures a strong school system.

The superintendent is deeply concerned with the professional success and general welfare of his staff. However, consistent with his responsibility to the board and the community, his professional allegiance to learners must transcend his loyalty to teachers, principals, and other professional workers. This ideal of service, coupled with thorough professional preparation and personal competence, makes him a determined leader to secure those working conditions — pupil load, building environment, teaching aids, adequate salary, health serv-

ices, sense of belonging, and security — which contribute to quality teaching and better learning. In short, he aids in providing all those things which help the professional teacher achieve success in teaching and all those things which help pupils to achieve success in learning.

The board of education expects its superintendent together with his professional staff to—

1. Have a deep devotion to the human values which are at the heart of America's purpose and upon which her destiny rests.
2. Be able to make wise and sound decisions toward the improvement of teaching and toward more efficient learning.
3. Know laboratory and classroom environments, tools for teaching, and the structural organization for deployment of staff and pupils.
4. Be well schooled in what science and research show about the expectations, drives, fears, interests, and personal diversities that exist in groups of teachers, children, and youth.
5. Understand the American public — what it is, what it wants, how it is organized, how it can make itself felt, and who leads it.
6. Be efficient in using public funds.
7. Have a combination of personal power, insight, and skill which enables him to get a team of associates to work closely and effectively with him.
8. Have wisdom and good judgment, as well as skill, in oral and written communication.
9. Possess creative, imaginative, and realistic competence in sensing society's evolutionary and emerging aspirations and needs.
10. Have the vision, courage, and patience needed to plan wisely for the future.
11. Be professionally competent in the area of evaluation.
12. Comprehend the educational needs of adults as well as those of children and youth.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPERINTENDENTS

It is clear now that many of the public's stereotypes of superintendents simply are not true. The school administrator of today has far more preparation for his job than did his counterpart in the 1930's

and 1940's. His education is of superior quality and is characterized by a depth of scholarship. For example:

1. The figures below demonstrate clearly that superintendents are rapidly becoming a highly prepared class of professionals.

Highest Degree Held	Percent
Ph.D.	6.1
Ed.D.	15.2
M.A.	73.9
B.A. or B.S.	2.4
Misc.	2.0
No Degree	0.4

2. Superintendents are considerably less transient than is commonly believed. More than 86 percent have held only three or fewer superintendencies throughout their professional careers.
3. In smaller communities the conventional career pattern is teacher, principal, superintendent. In larger districts the career pattern tends to be teacher, principal, central office administrator, superintendent. The data below reveal that nearly 9 out of every 10 superintendents have been classroom teachers and more than 8 out of every 10 have held one or more principalships.

Presuperintendency Experience	Percent
Elementary school teacher	22.0
Secondary school teacher	74.9
Classroom teacher, any level	88.1
Elementary school principal	22.8
Secondary school principal	48.4
Principal, any level	82.5

4. Talent is becoming scarce, and as a result superintendents' salaries have increased significantly (although not as rapidly as other segments of the profession).

Salaries of Superintendents
1966-1967

Enrollment in District	Annual Salary of Superintendent		
	Lowest	Median	Highest
100,000+	$20,000	$29,500	$48,500
50,000-99,999	18,000	23,700	35,000
25,000-49,999	15,000	24,000	30,000
12,000-24,999	10,550	20,586	31,000
6,000-11,999	8,500	18,670	33,000

5. School administrators today can be characterized as being on the march with a courageous determination to lift the profession of school administration to a status consistent with its responsibilities and professional complexities.

These are but a few of the things that school board members should bear in mind as they seek to identify and employ an educational leader. But they must know other things, too. For example, they must know not only what superintendents look like but what they do, what kinds of abilities they must possess, and what the crucial factors are that spell the difference between success and failure.

WHAT DOES A SUPERINTENDENT REALLY DO?

Generally speaking, there are a number of basic functions of the superintendency. These functions are an integral part of the work of every superintendent of schools, regardless of type or size of school system. *Planning* and *evaluation* underlie the entire complex. *Organization* establishes a framework. *Personnel, business, buildings,* and *auxiliary services* establish the necessary operating conditions for the educative process. *Information* and *advice* provide a two-way sharing of knowledge and ideas with the public and the school staff. *Coordination* binds all together so that the manpower and the materials of the entire school system may be focused on the larger function of *instruction.* A good superintendent of schools must be competent in each of these areas.

A great many research studies have been completed on the qualifications necessary for success in the superintendency. Generally speaking, the following factors seem to be among the most important:

Ability to see the whole picture

Unusual understanding of people

Unusual ability to live with a high-pressure job

Administrative experience

Ability to handle the multitude of technical aspects of the job

High intelligence.

If school boards are to select superintendents with wisdom, they must become conversant with the nature of the task to be performed, with the major areas of competence needed, and with the factors that superintendents themselves consider to be important. Boards should know, too, that the profession of school administration has said that an adequate program of preparation for the superintendency shall encompass a minimum of two years of graduate study in an approved university program designed to prepare school administrators.

KNOW YOURSELF AND YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

Before the board embarks on a search for a superintendent, it should look carefully at itself and the school system. The school board should develop, if it has not already done so, a very clear statement of the respective roles of the board of education and the superintendent of schools. Few things can destroy the initiative, morale, and effectiveness of a school system or of a professional staff more quickly than repeated intrusions of the school board into administrative matters.

In short, the board should prepare a very clear statement of what they believe to be the relationships that should exist between it and the superintendent.

One of the most difficult problems facing a school board member is gaining an understanding of his task and working with fellow members as a team. If he is especially interested in schools, and he should be, his energy and enthusiasm may lead him to trespass upon the duties of the school administrator. He must also remember that he is an individual citizen who cannot speak for the board and cannot make any promises respecting future decisions of the board. Those decisions must be evolved only through group deliberation.

In addition to delineating desirable relationships and roles for the board and the superintendent, the school board should take a careful look at its school system. Not only will this assist the school board in bringing into focus the type of man desired to fill the position, but it will also enable the board to answer questions that any competent school administrator will want to ask. Some of the things that a school

board should know about its school system — things that a prospective superintendent will want to know — are:

1. The educational aspirations of the board and the people it represents
2. The philosophy of the school system
3. The scope and content of the educational program
4. Current and projected school enrollments
5. Current and projected pupil-teacher ratio
6. The adequacy of existing school buildings and plans for school construction
7. The scope and nature of experimental programs
8. The administrative organization of the school system
9. Detailed knowledge of the school budget
10. Policies, rules, and regulations
11. The socioeconomic level of the community
12. The tax structure of the community.

A SYSTEMATIC PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION

Even with clearly defined expectations, adequate knowledge, and an understanding of the job to be performed, difficulties often set in when a board realizes that it must secure the services of a new superintendent. This need not and should not happen.

The selection of a chief school administrator should be a well thought out, systematic procedure. The board should not try to fill the vacancy overnight or in one short meeting. It is much better to devote two or three months to searching for a highly qualified school administrator than to make a hasty and unwise decision. Nevertheless, the board should move ahead. Delay or inactivity for many months is an almost sure way to discourage and lose potential candidates.

At this point the board's next step is to agree upon a procedure. An adequate selection procedure usually involves at least 10 steps:

1. Know what you want
2. Determine evaluative procedures
3. Announce the vacancy
4. Examine local candidates
5. Develop a list

6. Narrow the field
7. Interview the best
8. Visit the candidate's community; talk with members of the community
9. Make a choice
10. Work with the press, television, and radio.

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT

And write it down. Here the board may well seek advice. A job description and list of qualifications, if well done, will greatly facilitate the selection process and will enhance the likelihood of selecting the best man obtainable. It is illogical to consider the appointment of an individual to a responsible position without a clear idea of the qualifications and standard of performance expected. To shirk this task — difficult as it may be — is as meaningless as it would be to order an expensive piece of machinery without a set of specifications. In developing specifications for the job, school boards often utilize consultants from outside the community. Special care must be taken, however, to ensure that the participation of individuals or groups in developing the job description and list of qualifications does not make the new superintendent beholden to special interests. The educational welfare of children and youth must not be subordinated to any group or personal ambition.

A detailed list of qualifications that the board seeks in the new superintendent will simplify and hasten the selection process. In addition to identifying the salary range, the board will want to give some thought to such factors as age, marital status, educational qualifications, certification, teaching and administrative experience, and to special abilities needed.

DETERMINE EVALUATIVE PROCEDURES

Each candidate should be rated by each board member independently and privately at several different points throughout the selection process. Otherwise, one or two members may unduly influence the thinking of others. It is often helpful to develop a rating sheet for *credential evaluation, interview evaluation,* and *visitation evaluation.* Each board member can evaluate predetermined and agreed-upon

subitems such as instructional leadership, educational philosophy, personal relations, knowledge of finance, and other factors, using a 1-5 or similar type of rating scale. Other factors to be rated might include such things as appearance, health, sincerity, and alertness.

Specifically, board members should seek information that will help them make valid overall judgments on questions such as:

What are the candidate's beliefs about individual differences and curriculum development?

Does the candidate believe in the cooperative approach to the solution of school and school-community problems?

Does the candidate possess personal qualities that would command respect and confidence?

What has the candidate done that indicates a belief in the dignity and worth of every person?

What type of professional reputation does he enjoy?

What evidence is there to indicate that the candidate possesses skill in human relations?

Do the candidate's educational achievements in previous positions indicate leadership ability?

What has the candidate done in previous positions that indicates he has abilities in following sound personnel policies and practices?

What experience, training, and ability does the candidate possess in business and financial matters?

ANNOUNCE THE VACANCY

Professional superintendents will not and should not apply for a position unless they know a vacancy exists. Therefore, it is imperative that the vacancy be announced publicly. Public knowledge that there is a vacancy assures prospective candidates, university placement bureaus, and other professional sources which may be asked to recommend applicants that they act within the scope of professional ethics.

Selecting a superintendent of schools costs money. Thus, the school board should approve a budget for necessary expenses. A typical budget, which might include expenses for an advisory committee, postage, secretarial services, travel and lodging for candidates, and travel for board members to visit the home community of top candidates, might range from $500 to $5,000 depending on the number of candidates and the geographical area encompassed in the search.

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EXAMINE LOCAL CANDIDATES

Boards of education must protect the schools against provincialism, complacency, stagnation, and especially politics. Yet, at the same time, boards must reward superior service with promotion if they wish enthusiasm for personal and professional growth to permeate the staff. The board should systematically review the qualifications of local staff members to determine which ones meet the criteria set by the board, but it should be made clear that the ultimate selection will be made solely on the basis of the candidate's qualifications for the position. The board should determine whether the qualified local staff members are willing to be candidates for the position. Sometimes decisions regarding their competency and acceptability are made before the board begins to consider candidates from other school systems.

DEVELOP A LIST

Some persons will apply for the job following the announcement of the vacancy. However, many able superintendents will not apply for positions of their own volition — forward-looking boards must seek them out. Some boards find it expedient to appoint a special subcommittee to canvass for prospects. Others prefer to have the entire board participate. When the board is a large one, a special committee may interfere less with other board activities. However, regardless of the procedure decided upon, the *final* choice must always rest with the full board.

The school board, a subcommittee, or a person appointed by the school board, should communicate with placement officers, chief state school officers, other recognized school administrators, professional education associations, and university staff members, asking them to recommend persons whom they believe to be qualified and interested in the position.

Many boards of education have found it helpful to ask their state department of education, the state association of school superintendents, the state education association, state school boards associations, and selected individuals in colleges and universities to assist them in identifying qualified people. It should be pointed out, however, that although consultants can render invaluable aid and counsel to the board, *they should not participate in the final selection.*

NARROW THE FIELD

Once the applications, recommendations, and descriptive data are in the hands of the clerk, secretary of the board, or someone appointed by the board, the full board or its subcommittee is ready to begin screening and eliminating. Candidates and prospective candidates who do not meet the minimum personal and professional qualifications are naturally the first to be eliminated. Applicants who are eliminated from further consideration should be notified immediately. The next step is to narrow the number of apparently qualified candidates to a select few who are then invited for interviews with the entire board. Before this can be done it is often necessary to secure additional paper information about prospective candidates and to eliminate the names of those persons who do not wish to be considered for the vacancy. The remaining group should include only the best qualified in terms of the standards previously established. The number to be selected for personal interview should be determined in advance by the entire board, with provision for some flexibility, and the board should reimburse those interviewed for expenses they have incurred. Of course, the ethics of the situation demand that all proceedings be conducted in the strictest confidence.

INTERVIEW THE BEST

Interviews should be carefully planned. One person should be designated to arrange a schedule of interviews with the candidates. Enough time should be spent in interviewing each candidate so that the candidate and the board can become as well acquainted as possible. No more than one interview an evening is advisable. Every board member should be thoroughly familiar with the candidate's paper qualifications before the candidate appears for the interview. Before the interview, the candidates should have time to visit the school system and community in order to become aware of some of the strengths and weaknesses of each.

After introductions have been made, an effective way to begin an interview is to ask the candidate to discuss his background, future plans, and the reasons he is interested in becoming the superintendent of the school system. During the interview, both the board and the candidate should attempt to draw out from each other pertinent information upon which a final decision can be made.

Questions that will generally elicit information helpful to the board are:

What criteria would you use in evaluating an educational program?

What major problems have you faced in your present or previous administrative positions? How did you solve these problems?

How have you improved the school now under your direction?

How would you improve the abilities of a professional staff?

Have you been successful in obtaining support from the voters for levies and bond issues?

What is your concept of the role of the board of education and that of the superintendent?

How would you try to keep the public informed of the work of the school?

What do you consider to be your greatest assets and abilities?

VISIT THE CANDIDATE'S COMMUNITY

Once the board has reduced the number of possible candidates to three or four, they should visit the home community of each of those persons still being considered. The board should inform the prospective superintendent of their intention to visit his community and should seek his approval. He, in turn, should inform his board of the planned visit. Once a mutually acceptable time has been identified, the board, preferably the entire board, should call at the superintendent's office and then — on their own — visit with members of the staff, the local banker, the minister, a cab driver, members of the school board, the man on the street, staff members at the local university (if there is one), and other persons who might be acquainted with the candidate and his family. Since no superintendent is going to be happy unless his family, too, is happy, the board should have an opportunity to meet the prospective superintendent's wife and family — preferably in an informal atmosphere.

MAKE A CHOICE AND LET IT BE KNOWN

Boards of education should recall the one or two most promising individuals for a second interview, and, during the course of the second visit, arrangements should be made for the prospective superintendent

to meet some of the professional staff members, to chat at length with the incumbent superintendent, and to visit the community. Prior to the actual appointment of a man to the superintendency, he should be asked to take a complete physical examination and submit the findings to the board.

Final responsibility for selecting the superintendent resides in the full board alone. This responsibility should not be delegated to a subcommittee or to persons not members of the board. Only when the final decision is made by the entire board is there substantial groundwork for continuing compatibility. Unanimous selection is always good public policy. It gives promise of harmonious relationships between the board and the superintendent, and it buttresses the confidence of the lay and school community in the board and superintendent.

The exact date for announcing the appointment should be agreed upon by the two boards involved and the newly appointed superintendent.

All credentials and confidential letters should be returned to placement bureaus or other sources, and personal letters should be sent to all candidates announcing the decision and expressing the appreciation of the board.

WORK WITH THE PRESS, TELEVISION, AND RADIO

It is important that the press, television, and radio be kept informed of school affairs — especially on a matter of such crucial importance. Immediate announcement of the appointment of a superintendent through the newspaper, television, and radio strengthens the positions of both the board and the newly elected superintendent and helps pave the way for community acceptance. Information should come from the whole board and not from any one individual. Increasingly, boards of education call a press conference to announce and introduce the new superintendent to his colleagues and his constituency.

THE OLD AND THE NEW

What services can the school board expect from the outgoing superintendent? Should he be involved in the selection process? What courtesies should all applicants extend to their employing school boards? The answers to these questions are not always clearly evident, but they are important.

If requested, persons leaving the superintendency should assist the board of education in the selection process but *not* in the actual selection. Generally, the outgoing superintendent can and should assist the school board in developing job specifications, identifying sources of recommendations, planning the interview, and providing all applicants with detailed knowledge about the community and the school system.

In addition, the outgoing superintendent should be sure that he gives the school board ample notice of his intention to vacate the position; clears up, if at all possible, all outstanding desk work; leaves a detailed analysis of all unfinished business; and does everything within his power to help the new superintendent adjust to the job.

By the same token, every person being considered for a superintendency has obligations both to his present board and to any prospective board. For example, a superintendent has an obligation to let his present board know if he is being considered and is an active candidate for a new position. Also, any person being considered for a new position should not divulge confidential information given to him by a prospective board; nor should he release any information to the press or to any other source unless by mutual agreement of the prospective board, his present board, and himself. No superintendent, at any time or under any condition, should indulge in derogatory statements about a school system or a colleague.

WHAT SHOULD A BOARD EXPECT?

Once a final selection has been made, the board must not assume that its job is done. Only rarely, if at all, will a superintendent measure up to all of the specifications and criteria established by the school board. In short, the selection of a superintendent of schools in most instances results in a compromise of some of the qualifications originally sought. This is to be expected. The important point is that this be clearly understood and that both the superintendent and the school board pursue a course of action that will strengthen and improve the quality of professional leadership in the school system. One way of doing this is to provide opportunities for the superintendent's continuing growth. Every school board should expect its superintendent to continue to grow through attendance at appropriate conferences, seminars, clinics, and other meetings. But a board has a right to expect more than this.

Superintendents would agree that the following are reasonable expectations for boards of education:

1. A school board should expect its superintendent to serve as its chief executive officer.
2. A board should expect its superintendent to be its professional adviser in all matters and to recommend appropriate school policies for its consideration.
3. A board should expect its superintendent to implement and execute all policies adopted by it.
4. A board should expect its superintendent to keep it fully and accurately informed about the school program.
5. A board should expect its superintendent to interpret the needs of the school system.
6. A board should expect its superintendent to present his professional recommendations on all problems and issues considered by it.
7. A board should expect its superintendent to devote a large share of his thought and time to the improvement of instruction.
8. A board should expect its superintendent to be alert to advances and improvements in educational programs, wherever they may be found.
9. A board should expect its superintendent to lead in the development and operation of an adequate program of school-community relations.
10. A board should expect its superintendent to participate in community activities.
11. A board should expect its superintendent to use great care in nominating candidates for appointment to the school staff.
12. A board should expect its superintendent to recommend for purchase equipment, books, and supplies that are appropriate to the purposes and needs of the school system.
13. A board should expect its superintendent to present for its consideration an annual budget that is designed to serve the needs of the school system.
14. The board should expect its superintendent to establish and operate the financial operations of the school district to ensure adherence to budget provisions and the wise use of school funds.

WHAT SHOULD A SUPERINTENDENT EXPECT?

A superintendent has a right to expect certain things from his board. The responsibilities and obligations of a board to its superintendent have been cited many times. The following list represents a clear and concise statement of the board's responsibilities to its chief executive.

1. To assist the superintendent with counsel and advice, giving him the benefit of its judgment, business experience, and familiarity with the local school system and the community. Also, to consult with the superintendent on all matters concerning the school system which the board is considering or about which it propos s to take action.
2. To delegate to the superintendent responsibility for all executive functions, to refrain from handling directly any administrative details, and to give the superintendent authority commensurate with his responsibilities.
3. To make all employees of the school system responsible to the superintendent, to refrain from any direct dealings with any of them, and to require and receive all reports from them through the superintendent.
4. To refer all applications, complaints, and other communications, oral or written, to the superintendent, except when such may come to the board, in meeting, on appeal from decisions of the superintendent.
5. To provide adequate safeguards for the superintendent and other personnel so that they may perform their proper functions on a professional basis. This involves, particularly, supporting the superintendent in his efforts to protect the personnel and the schools from individuals and organizations seeking to exploit the schools for selfish reasons.
6. To support the superintendent loyally and actively in all decisions and actions conformable to proper professional standards and the announced policy of the board, and to accept full responsibility for administrative acts authorized by, or resulting from, the policies of the board.
7. To hold the superintendent strictly responsible for the administration of the schools, to require him to keep the board fully

informed at all times, through both written and oral reports, to review and appraise the results of his work, and to inform him when any methods or procedures do not meet with the approval of the board.

8. If, after fair and impartial appraisal and due admonishment, the board is convinced that the superintendent's services do not meet with its approval, to notify him kindly and courteously and as far in advance as possible, in accordance with board policy and the legal requirements of the state, that a change must be made; and to replace him with a carefully selected new superintendent.

TAKING STOCK

Every board of education has not only the right but an inescapable and serious duty to evaluate the superintendent's work. After a reasonable length of time on the job has passed, the board should undertake an evaluation of the superintendent's work in terms of the criteria set forth when the initial selection was made. These criteria, and others that might have been developed and agreed upon since a person was appointed, when they are clearly and fully understood by both the board and the superintendent, provide a good basis for evaluating the chief executive.

In other words, the evaluation of the superintendent's work should be directly related to the duties and responsibilities outlined for him. Judgments, if they are to be sound, should be made by the whole board on the basis of valid evidence submitted by competent persons. The evaluation, of course, should be in the public interest and should be made carefully, thoughtfully, deliberately, impartially, and impersonally. After an initial period during which the superintendent can become familiar with the community, the school system, and the requirements of his job — perhaps one to two years — evaluation should be a continuous undertaking.

GUIDELINES FOR A SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

A contract between a board of education and a superintendent of schools is an educational instrument and can enhance the relationship between the parties. Ideally, the contract sets forth the conditions of employment and the duties and responsibilities to which both parties

agree. It is neither desirable nor possible to develop one model contract with universal applicability. Meaningful contracts should reflect accurately the unique desires of the school district and contain the terms agreed to by both parties and, of course, must be in accordance with existing state statutes. This sample contract and amendment is presented in the hope that it will provide the basis for intelligent discussion and improved school administration.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

A Working Guide

It is hereby agreed by and between the Board of Education of the ..... School District No. .....located in ..... County in the State of ..... (hereinafter called the Board) and (name of employee) (hereinafter called the Superintendent) that the said Board in accordance with its action as found in the minutes of the meeting held on the ..... day of ..... 19.... has and does hereby employ the said (name of employee) as Superintendent of Schools for a ..... year period commencing ....., 19..... Both parties agree that said employee shall perform the duties of the Superintendent of Schools in and for the public schools in said District as prescribed by the laws of the State of ..... and by the rules and regulations made thereunder by the Board of Education of said District.

WITNESSETH

- That, in consideration of a salary of $..... to be paid the first year, $..... to be paid the second year, $..... to be paid the third year, and . . . said Superintendent agrees to perform faithfully the duties of Superintendent of Schools and to serve as Executive Officer of the Board of Education. The annual salary shall be paid in equal installments in accordance with the policy of the Board governing payment of other professional staff members in the District.

- That the Board of Education hereby retains the right to adjust the annual salary of the Superintendent during the term of his contract, said salary adjustment not to reduce the annual salary below the figures stated above. Any adjustment in salary made during the life of

this contract shall be in the form of an amendment and shall become a part of this contract. It is provided, however, that by so doing it shall not be considered that the Board of Education has entered into a new contract with the Superintendent nor that the termination date of the existing contract has been extended. However, the Board may by specific action extend the termination date of the existing contract if such extension is permitted by state law.

● That throughout the term of this contract the Superintendent shall be subject to discharge for good and just causes, provided, however, that the Board does not arbitrarily or capriciously call for his dismissal and that the Superintendent shall have the right to service of written charges, notice of hearing, and a fair hearing before the Board. If the Superintendent chooses to be accompanied by legal counsel at the hearing, said legal expenses will be incurred by the Superintendent.

● That it is agreed that the Superintendent will furnish throughout the life of this contract a valid and appropriate certificate to act as Superintendent of Schools in the State of ..... as directed by the Board of Education and that the Superintendent hereby agrees to devote his time, skill, labor, and attention to said employment during the term of this contract, provided, however, that the Superintendent, by agreement with the Board, may undertake consultative work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing, or other professional duties and obligations.

● That the Superintendent will have complete freedom to organize, reorganize, and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff which in his judgment best serves the ..... Public Schools; that the administration of instruction and business affairs will be lodged with the Superintendent and administered by him with the assistance of his staff; that the responsibility for selection (subject to board approval), placement, and transfer of personnel shall be vested in the Superintendent and his staff; and that the Board of Education, individually and collectively, will refer promptly all criticisms, complaints, and suggestions called to its attention to the Superintendent for study and recommendation.

● That should the Superintendent be unable to perform any or all of his duties by reason of illness, accident, or other cause beyond his control and said disability exists for a period of more than .....

.....during any school year, the School District may in its discretion make a proportionate deduction from the salary stipulated, and if such disability continues for more than ..... or if said disability is permanent, irreparable, or of such nature as to make the performance of his duties impossible, the school district may, at its option, terminate this agreement, whereupon the respective duties, rights, and obligations hereof shall terminate.

- That the Superintendent does hereby agree to have a comprehensive medical examination not less than once every two years and not more often than once each year; that a statement certifying to the physical competency of the Superintendent of Schools shall be filed with the clerk or secretary of the Board of Education and treated as confidential information by the Board, the cost of said medical report to be borne by the District.

- That the Board of Education shall provide the Superintendent with transportation required in the performance of his official duties during his employment under this contract or shall provide him with $..... annually in lieu of transportation.

- That the Board of Education shall devote a portion or all of one meeting, at least annually, to a discussion of the working relationships between the Superintendent and the Board.

- That the Superintendent shall receive ..... days vacation annually exclusive of legal holidays and shall be entitled to ..... days sick leave annually. Vacation shall be taken within 12 months of the year in which it is earned and shall not be cumulative. Earned sick leave shall be cumulative to a maximum of ..... days or as provided by state law or Board policy.

- That the Board of Education at the request of the Superintendent and when in accordance with state statutes shall withhold and transfer an amount of salary annually or semi-annually or ....., said amount to be determined by the Superintendent, permitting the Superintendent of Schools to participate, if he so desires, in a tax-deferred annuity program of his choosing.

- That the Superintendent shall attend appropriate professional meetings at the local, state, and national level, the expenses of said attendance to be incurred by the District.

- That the Board of Education shall reimburse the Superintendent for expenses incurred in moving his family, furniture, household goods, and related personal belongings from ..... to ....., said expenses not to exceed $.....

- That failure to notify the Superintendent in writing, no later than one full year prior to the termination of the contract, of the Board's intent not to renew the contract will automatically result in a one-year extension of the existing contract.

- That the Superintendent shall fulfill all aspects of this contract, any exception thereto being by mutual consent of the Board and the Superintendent. Failure to fulfill the obligations agreed to in this contract will be viewed as a violation of the administrators' Code of Ethics and will be reported by the Board to the appropriate State Association of School Administrators and state educational authorities.

Dated this ..... day of ....., 19.....

.....
(President, or Chairman, Board of Education)

.....
(Secretary or Clerk, Board of Education)

.....
(Employee)

ACTION AMENDING EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT
BY AND BETWEEN
BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT

This is to certify that the employment agreement entered into by and between the Board of Education of ..... School District No. ..... located in ..... County in the State of ..... and (name of employee) on ....., 19...., effective ....., 19...., is hereby amended by action taken by the Board at its regular meeting

of ....., 19....: in accordance with authority contained in said employment agreement, the annual salary for the Superintendent of Schools shall be $.....

.....
(President, or Chairman, Board of Education)

.....
(Secretary or Clerk, Board of Education)

.....
(Employee)

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Ever since the third decade of the nineteenth century, the superintendent of schools has been a key person in the educational process. The broad outlines of the community's educational program emerge as he marshals resources, supplies information, stimulates discussion and research, resolutely faces critical problems, and judiciously weighs alternative courses of action; as he extends opportunities for staff members to acquire new insights; and as he evaluates, recommends, and initiates action.

Today, the superintendent of schools occupies a complex and demanding position. He is often torn between diverse alternatives, obligations, and responsibilities.

Schools need courageous leadership. School boards must make it possible for school superintendents to dream, to create, to plan, and to lead. School boards need to encourage their executive officers to participate in their professional organizations. Likewise, school superintendents need strong, informed, and stout-hearted school boards and should encourage strong school board organizations. The school board-school superintendent partnership has heavy responsibilities. Each has a vital role. Each needs the help, support, and encouragement of the other.